

REMARKS


In view of the following remarks, Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the above-identified application.

Claims 1-10 remain pending in this application, with Claims 1 and 5-7 being independent. By this Amendment, Applicants are amending the specification to attend to formal matters. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,919,985 (Furukawa, et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,809,048 (Sschichijyo, et al.). Furukawa, et al. is assigned to Canon Kabushiki Kaisha. Canon Kabushiki Kaisha is also the assignee of the present application, as indicated in the Assignment recorded in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office at Reel 014308, Frame 0410. In addition, Applicants submit that Furukawa, et al. and the presently claimed invention were, at the time the claimed invention was made, both owned by or subject to an obligation of Assignment to Canon Kabushiki Kaisha. Consequently, Applicants submit Furukawa, et al. does not qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot, and request withdrawal thereof.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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